



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
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OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

June 16, 2017

Lieutenant Colonel Damon Delarosa
District Engineer, Walla Walla District
201 North Third Avenue
Walla Walla, WA 99362-1876

**RE: Public Notice NWW-2004-0600046-B02, Thorn Creek & Unnamed Tributaries, Idaho
Transportation Department**

Dear Lieutenant Colonel Delarosa:

This letter responds to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Walla Walla District's May 17, 2017 Public Notice (PN) for a proposal by the Idaho Transportation Department to construct 6.34 miles of new 4-lane divided highway for US 95, between Mile Posts 337.67 and 344.00. Presently, this stretch is a two-lane highway. The project would include the following components, as identified in the PN:

- Discharge of 4,373 cubic yards of road fill material to permanently fill 3.43 acres of wetlands.
- Discharge of 620 cubic yards of road fill material below the ordinary high water mark of five (5) unnamed tributaries.
- Piping of 4,290 linear feet of unnamed tributaries/drainages.
- Construction of 4,030 linear feet of onsite drainages, adjacent of the new roadway.
- Installation of 16 culverts under the new highway.
- Temporary filling of 0.25 acres of wetlands and drainages during construction.

The project site would be located east of the existing alignment, within Sections 19, 20, 29-32, T. 39 N., R. 5 W.; Sections 24 and 25, T. 39 N., R. 6 W.; Sections 5-9, 17, 18, and 20, T. 38 N., R. 5 W.; and Sections 1, 12, and 13, T. 38 N., R. 6 W., in Latah County, near Moscow, Idaho. The project would extend from 46.713606 N. Latitude, -117.003931 W. Longitude (northern end) to 46.627778 N. Latitude, -116.995381 W. Longitude (southern end).

SUMMARIZE CONCERNS HERE

Section 230.10(a) of the Guidelines prohibits the discharge of dredged and/or fill material into waters of the U.S. when there is a practicable alternative that would have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem, so long as that alternative does not have other significant impacts. Based on our assessment of this project, it is EPA's conclusion that

Deliberative Process / Ex. 5

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

Enclosed are the EPA's substantive comments regarding the proposed project. Many of these same comments were raised during our review of the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement and are reiterated here for consistency.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments. We look forward to working collaboratively with the Corps and ITD, as necessary, to resolve the issues raised in this letter. Together we can work to *"restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters"* and preserve our natural heritage in the Palouse. For further coordination and clarification of these comments, please contact me at (206) 553-1601 or via electronic mail at reichgott.christine@epa.gov, or contact Elaine Somers at (206) 553-2966 or via electronic mail at somers.elaine@epa.gov. For questions regarding aquatic resources, contact Tracy DeGering in our Boise Operations Office at (208) 378-5756, or at degering.tracy@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

David Allnutt, Director
Office of Environmental Review and Assessment

Enclosure

Cc: